CLAIMS

1. A method for generating and coding for transmission an animated graphic image, comprising the steps of:

composing a first frame of the image from a plurality of component objects from a predetermined set of object types, the composition including scaling and location of each object within a fixed coordinate set image field;

coding the first frame as an ordered rendering list of the component objects, the rendering list identifying the order in which the component objects are to be rendered on regeneration of the image;

sequentially coding each subsequent frame (n) as a number of data words representing the difference between that frame (n) and the previous frame (n-1).

2. A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the data words coding each subsequent frame (n) identify new component objects to be added or component objects from the previous frame (n-1) to be moved, transformed or removed.

3. A method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of defining a shape as a plurality of component objects, wherein the definition of the shape is transmitted with the animated graphic image and wherein references to the shape in the animated graphic image are replaced with the component objects when generated.

4. A method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising the step of defining an object shape in a bit map for at least one component object in the composed frame.

5. A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the data words include selected ones of place object, place shape, move absolute, move relative, resize and remove.

6. A method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the data words specify a motion vector identifying a movement pattern for a respective object from which the object position in a subsequent frame may be determined.

7. A portable communications apparatus configured to receive and decode animated graphics images generated and coded in accordance with the method of Claim 1, the apparatus comprising:

a display device coupled with a display driver system arranged to format images for display;

a processor arranged to reconstruct the coded image;

a receiver coupled with said display driver, being configured to receive the coded image data and pass it to the processor;

first storage means containing said object and animation identifier codes, and second storage means for storing reconstructed image frames;

wherein the processor is arranged to reconstruct individual frames of the animation by identifying and reconstructing objects from object identifier codes and by applying animation transforms to objects from previous frames in dependence on animation codes.

8. A portable communications apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the display driver system includes the processor, the first storage means and the second storage means.

9. A portable communications apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the display driver system is a vector graphics system.